

Think Martu. Think Differently. Act Differently.

How KJ works with Martu

June 2021



Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa

A note from the evaluators

We acknowledge and pay our respect to Martu

We were welcomed onto Martu Country and into community to sit with, listen to and learn from Martu as they told their stories, history and shared their culture and language with us. We were privileged to visit and learn the names of sacred waterholes that had been cared for by generations of Martu men and women. We were given the opportunity to learn about the journey of Martu over the past ten years and in so doing, capture the role that Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa (KJ) has played in that story.

We acknowledge and pay our respect to Martu Country where the work for this evaluation took place. We also acknowledge and pay our respect to Martu Elders and people who welcomed us into their communities and shared their culture, stories and history with us.

We also acknowledge and show our gratitude to the numerous KJ staff who travelled with us into the desert, enabling our journey as visitors through Martu Country.

About the title

The title for this evaluation report is unique and intends to bring the reader into the story about how Martu, with KJ, have sought to preserve their identity and culture while redefining their future in the modern world. This report attempts to translate the story of Martu so that Government, investors and the general public can appreciate the value, strength and resilience of Martu and how KJ has helped Martu protect their past and redefine their future.



Photo taken on the sand dunes near Punmu, Martu Country, at sunset

Credit: Alison Kwok, November 2020

Funding Acknowledgement

This evaluation was made possible through the support of The Lionel and Yvonne Spencer Trust, The Brian J Sutton Charitable Trust and BHP.

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Executive Summary

Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa (KJ) is a Martu organisation. KJ engaged Social Ventures Australia Consulting to evaluate their impact on Martu communities between 2010 and 2020. Part of this evaluation also considered whether Martu think KJ has embodied its organisational values in the past ten years.

At the commencement of this project, KJ had seven organisational values that were developed with Martu in 2008, soon after KJ was formed. KJ's values and its embodiment of those values had not been reviewed since then. This evaluation was an opportunity for Martu to reflect on and articulate how they want organisations to work with them, including KJ. For KJ, it was a chance to review their organisational values to ensure that they continue to align with how Martu want them to work.

About Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa

KJ is a Martu organisation created in 2005 to achieve three objectives: to preserve Martu culture; to build a viable, sustainable economy in Martu communities; and to build realistic pathways for young Martu to a healthy and prosperous future.

In addressing these high-level objectives, KJ runs a suite of cultural, environmental and social programs in Martu communities and in Newman. These address a diverse array of issues and include many aspects of cultural knowledge preservation; a substantial ranger program and associated land management programs; and programs addressing a myriad social issues including early childhood education, adult education, incarceration, substance abuse and governance.

These programs seek to provide employment while preserving the deep Martu relationship with their country, maintaining the natural and cultural values of that country, creating greater Martu capacity to engage with Western agencies and developing Martu-led approaches to entrenched social problems.

Due to the dominant focus on preservation of the natural and cultural values of Martu country, KJ's programs are directed predominantly (although not exclusively) to Martu living in or near the Martu native title determination. As Section 4 outlines in more detail, only about 50% of the total Martu population now live close to their traditional homelands. This is due to a historical dispersal of a diaspora around the edges of the Western Desert, the effects of the Stolen Generation on some families and relocation of some Martu families to Perth.

KJ's eight organisational values

At the outset of this evaluation, Martu reflected on KJ's seven existing values and felt that overall, they continued to be relevant. Martu did, however, add the additional value of *walyja* (family) and replace the existing value of 'realism' with *minyirra* (being serious).

The final eight organisational values are listed below. The values begin with a word in Martu language to embody the essence of each as they relate to Martu. The reader should be advised that while these words capture the concepts of each value, they are not direct translations of the English words. Further explanations of the Martu words used to describe values is contained in section six.

1. **Walyja: Family** – People working together and identifying personally with this work as one would with family.
2. **Ngaparrji-Ngaparrji: Respect** – Martu and non-Martu can work strongly together if they respect each other and act with respect towards each other.
3. **Minyirra: Being serious** – Taking matters seriously, 'not playing games' and being 'real about it'.
4. **Yiltanyju: Honesty** – Talking to and dealing straight with each other, Government and others.

5. **Kujungka: Partnership** – Martu and non-Martu working together as equals, with complementary skills and knowledge.
6. **Warrkamu: Participation** – By building a culture of participation in Martu communities, individual Martu will be supported and strengthened.
7. **Yiwarra: Building** – Creating the future that Martu people want, that strengthens Martu society and engages confidently and effectively with mainstream society.
8. **Nyakuma nintirri: Reflection** – Combining action with reflection, to learn as we go.

Martu reflections on KJ's embodiment of values

Three separate community consultation trips were undertaken to engage Martu in Newman, Parnngurr, Punmu, Kunawarritji and Jigalong. At each community consultation session, Martu reflected on whether they believed KJ embodied the eight organisational values.

A substantial majority of Martu across all communities reported that they felt KJ has lived up to and demonstrated its eight organisational values over the past ten years.

KJ has built a culture of participation, such that Martu feel KJ is “for families all over and all across the desert”. Martu also feel KJ is working with them in partnership as equals. KJ is serious about building a better future for Martu and has been dedicated to that vision since it began in 2005.

Martu feel confident that KJ listen to them, learn from the past and fix their mistakes. Martu also feel that KJ is honest, truthful and, importantly, are respectful towards elders in their communities, ensuring that “old people are in the front”.

Finally, over the past ten years, Martu feel KJ has demonstrated a commitment to the value of *walyja* (family). KJ works for the whole family, old and young, and helps Martu care for country, which is also an important part of looking after family.

KJ organisational value	Key Martu reflections
<p>Walyja: Family – People working together and identifying personally with this work as one would with family. See page 15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martu feel KJ demonstrates a commitment to walyja. • Importantly, KJ helps Martu connect to and care for country, which is an important part of looking after family. As country is inextricably linked to family, by enabling connection to and caring for country, Martu feel KJ is demonstrating a commitment to <i>walyja</i>.
<p>Ngaparrji-Ngaparrji: Respect – Martu and non-Martu can work strongly together if they respect each other See page 15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martu feel respected by KJ. KJ listen to and consult with elders who are the leaders in the community. They also follow Martu rules when carrying out their work.
<p>Minyirra: Being serious – Taking matters seriously, ‘not playing games’ and being ‘real about it’. See page 16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KJ are not ‘playing games’. They are serious about working with Martu and are committed to improving outcomes. Martu feel KJ is real about their focus on working with Martu to create a better future. • KJ has been working seriously with Martu for over ten years.
<p>Yiltanyju: Honesty – Talking to and dealing straight with each other, Government and others. See page 17</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martu feel KJ is truthful and honest. KJ is also helping to make personal finances clearer for Martu by implementing financial literacy programs and designing a Martu payslip in graphical form to help Martu understand where their wages are going and why.

<p>Kujungka: Partnership – Martu and non-Martu working together as equals, with complementary skills and knowledge. See page 17</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martu feel strongly that KJ is working effectively in partnership with them and many feel both KJ and Martu are “<i>working together as one</i>”. • The ongoing situation with poor housing in communities is, however, having some negative impact on the partnership. Martu are very concerned about the state of their homes in communities but there has been little progress. Martu look to KJ to resolve the issue despite housing being outside KJ’s remit. Without further government investment, Martu communities cannot improve housing stock and KJ does not have the means to resolve this issue despite Martu looking to KJ for a solution. Martu are now attributing some degree of the lack of progress to KJ, injuring KJ’s relationship with Martu. • Some Martu have also cautioned against the impact of staff turnover on the partnership. For small Martu communities where relationships are significant, the departure of staff is often felt very strongly.
<p>Warrkamu: Participation – By building a culture of participation, individual Martu will be supported and strengthened. See page 18</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KJ has built a culture of participation. KJ exists for all Martu across all communities. Martu feel confident that any Martu coming from different countries can work with KJ.
<p>Yiwarra: Building – Creating the future that Martu people want, that strengthens Martu society and engages confidently and effectively with mainstream society. See page 19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KJ is dedicated to working with Martu to build a better future that Martu want. Over the past ten years, KJ has worked with Martu towards a future where Martu society is stronger and engages confidently with mainstream society. • The ongoing situation with housing is also having some negative impact on how effectively Martu feel KJ is building for that future. Without further government investment, Martu communities and KJ do not have the means to resolve the issue.
<p>Nyakuma nintirri: Reflection – Combining action with reflection, to learn as we go. See page 21</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martu feel KJ listens, learns from the past and addresses any mistakes they have made.

1. Purpose of this Report

Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa (KJ) engaged Social Ventures Australia (SVA) Consulting to evaluate their impact on Martu communities between 2010 and 2020. The evaluation has three purposes:

1. Create an opportunity for Martu to articulate the outcomes that matter to them and for the impact of programs involving Martu to be measured against those outcomes.
2. Understand the extent to which KJ has contributed to outcomes that are important to Martu communities over the past ten years.
3. Reflect on KJ's organisational values and how KJ works with Martu.

For simplicity, the evaluation is separated into two reports. The first report addresses the first two purposes and the second report (this document) addresses the third purpose.

The two documents form a set of “twin reports” and the reader is encouraged to read both together. Importantly, full background chapters including those about Martu and KJ are contained in the first report. The reader should refer to the first report for that information. Those background chapters have not been duplicated in this second report. However, for context, summary versions have been provided.

This second report is presented in seven chapters:

1. **Purpose of this Report:** Background and introduction to this report.
2. **Evaluation Methodology:** This chapter summarises the methodology used for this evaluation. The full methodology can be read in full in the first report.
3. **About Martu:** This chapter provides summarised background information about Martu. In particular, introducing Martu history, geography and the strength and resilience of Martu.
4. **About KJ:** This chapter summarises KJ's purpose and activities.
5. **KJ's organisational values:** This chapter sets out eight organisational values that describe how Martu want organisations to work with them. Martu have assessed KJ against these values in this evaluation.
6. **Martu reflections on KJ's embodiment of values:** This chapter provides Martu reflections on whether they believe KJ has embodied each of the eight organisational values.
7. **Concluding Remarks:** This chapter sets out overall conclusions drawn from the evaluation.

2. Evaluation Methodology

This section provides a summary of the methodology used in this evaluation as it relates to KJ's organisational values and how well Martu feel KJ embodies those values. A full version of the methodology can be found in the first report.

Guiding principles for evaluation

In undertaking this project, the following principles guided the evaluation:

- **Who: This is a Martu story, by Martu, for Martu and 'whitefellas'**¹ – This project was a chance for Martu to reflect on and describe how they want organisations to work with them. The organisational values articulated by Martu in this project will be an important guide for all organisations that work with Martu. The project was also a chance for Martu to reflect on the extent to which KJ has embodied those organisational values in the past ten years.
- **How: Martu voices are central to the evaluation** – The evaluation needed to tell the story of Martu experiences as a result of KJ's contribution. Martu informed the design of the evaluation criteria and method for consultation. The consultation approach in Martu communities also needed to be led by Martu, wherever possible and appropriate.
- **What: The output will be shared with different audiences and complement other Martu and KJ research and stories** – For Martu communities, this evaluation needed to support the evolution of how KJ and other organisations work with Martu. The evaluation also indicates an approach and method for working with Indigenous communities that Martu affirmed as being aligned with their priorities and preferences.

There were two key design elements that ensured Martu voices were central to the evaluation:

- A discovery workshop was held at the beginning of the evaluation with Martu Leadership Program (MLP) members to consider and affirm or change a list of organisational values that they believed KJ, and other organisations working with Martu communities should embody in their work with Martu. The MLP is made up of young Martu (aged between 18 to 35) who are building their capability to become leaders, especially at the interface between 'whitefella' and Martu worlds. The organisational values were validated with other Martu in community consultation sessions held in Newman, Jigalong, Parnngurr, Punmu and Kunawarritji to ensure there was agreement from the broader community.
- Three to five MLP members were involved as co-facilitators in subsequent community consultation sessions. MLP members led workshops and acted as translators.

Evidence used for evaluation

The primary source of evidence used for this second report was community consultations with Martu held in 2020 by the evaluators for this project.

Community consultation

The evaluation took place over approximately seven months. During that time, three separate community consultation trips were undertaken to engage with Martu in Newman, Parnngurr, Punmu, Kunawarritji and Jigalong. 75 Martu were consulted through a series of community workshops and individual interviews as set out in the table below.

¹ Martu characterise Western society and mainstream systems, government and organisations as 'whitefellas'. This report adopts that term for consistently with the Martu world view.

Community consultation sessions or individual interviews	Number of Martu consulted
Martu Leadership Program members consultation session	18
Newman community consultation session*	11
Parnngurr community consultation session*	7
Punmu community consultation session*	5
Kunawarritji community consultation session*	4
Jigalong community consultation session*	8
KJ Martu board member consultation session	18
Additional individual interviews with Martu**	4
Total	75

* MLP members and KJ Martu board members also represented their individual communities in their consultation sessions.

** In total there were 14 individual interviews undertaken with Martu however ten of these interviewees were also present in other consultation sessions and so have been removed from this line to avoid double counting.

Alignment with Productivity Commission Indigenous Evaluation Strategy 2020²

In October 2020, the Productivity Commission released an Indigenous Evaluation Strategy setting out a new approach to evaluating policies and programs affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, aimed at improving the quality and usefulness of evaluation.

The Strategy includes a set of guiding principles of what good practice looks like and what agencies should consider when undertaking evaluations. In particular, it articulates an overarching evaluation principle of *Centring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, perspectives and knowledges*.³

This principle emphasises that what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people value, their knowledges and lived experiences need to be reflected in what is evaluated, how evaluation is undertaken and the objectives of policies and programs.

Practically, this means that:

- Evaluations are undertaken in the areas, and address the issues, that are most important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Evaluation processes strengthen and support the evaluation capability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, organisations and communities have the opportunity to decide how they want to be involved in evaluations.

The evaluation methodology for this project aligns with this overarching evaluation principle because:

- The evaluation was grounded in the organisational values articulated by Martu to state how they want organisations to work with their communities. In this way, the evaluation focusses in the areas that are most important to Martu.
- The evaluation was an opportunity for Martu to describe what organisational values are important to them and for organisations working with Martu to be guided by those values. In this way, the project has been a chance for Martu to develop a set of values that they can use to hold organisations and government to account when working with their communities.

² Productivity Commission, *Indigenous Evaluation Strategy*, October 2020.

³ As above, Page 10.

- The evaluation process was co-designed with Martu from the MLP and also involved Martu in co-facilitation of consultation sessions. In this way, the evaluation has strengthened and supported the evaluation capability of Martu and has given Martu the opportunity to decide how they want to be involved in the evaluation.

3. About Martu and KJ

About Martu

The Martu are the traditional custodians of a vast area of the Great Sandy, Little Sandy and Gibson Deserts in the Western Desert of the Pilbara.⁴ Their country stretches from the Percival Lakes in the north to south of Lake Disappointment and far to the east of the Canning Stock Route, stretching towards the Western Australia and Northern Territory border.

Martu include people from several traditional language groups spread over their vast desert lands: Manyjilyjarra, Kartujarra, Putijarra, Warnman, Nyangajarra and Pijakarli. They are among the most traditional Aboriginal groups in Australia, with many elders having had first contact as young adults or children walking into Western settlements from a completely traditional desert life in the 1960s.

The Martu identify as one people. Their identity and their rights to their country were acknowledged in 2002, when their native title over much of their country was formally recognised.⁵ The Martu are now concentrated in Port Hedland, Newman, Perth and several WA desert communities: Jigalong, Parnngurr, Punmu and Kunawarritji. They remain a strong and distinctive Indigenous community, with a proud identity and history.

About KJ

KJ was originally established to look after Martu culture and heritage and to ensure that the ongoing connection Martu have with country remains strong.

Over time KJ broadened its scope to focus on working with Martu to build strong, sustainable communities with the following core objectives:

- Support Martu to look after culture and country
- Build a sustainable economy in the Martu communities
- Build pathways for young Martu to a healthy future

The governing body is referred to as the KJ Board and consists of 12 Martu directors and three non-voting advisory directors. The 12 Martu directors include two each from five Martu communities and two from the Martu diaspora.

KJ has grown significantly over the past ten years and currently administers programs in three fields, as listed below. It should be noted that this listing does not represent the administrative organisation of programs within the company, nor that they are distinct as there is substantial overlap and interaction among the programs:

- **Land Programs:** These programs include KJ's flagship Ranger Program and ancillary programs which focus on location, monitoring and protection of areas of natural and cultural value. These include the fire program and feral animal program.
- **Cultural Programs:** These programs are focussed on the preservation and propagation of a wide range of cultural knowledge, including but not limited to traditional knowledge.
- **Social Programs:** These programs focus on a diverse array of contemporary social issues including early childhood development and family strength, adult education, crime and incarceration, alcohol and substance abuse, economic development, governance and relations with government.

⁴ Much of this section is taken from SVA Consulting's 2014 evaluative SROI of KJ's On Country programs, which can be accessed from KJ's website: <http://www.kj.org.au/evaluationprograms/>.

⁵ Federal Court of Australia, James on behalf of the Martu People v State of Western Australia, [2002] FCA 1208.

It also should be noted that due to the dominant focus on preservation of the natural and cultural values of Martu country, KJ's programs are directed predominantly (although not exclusively) to Martu living in or near the Martu native title determination. Only about 50% of the total Martu population now live close to their traditional homelands. This is due to a historical dispersal of a diaspora around the edges of the Western Desert, the effects of the Stolen Generation on some families and relocation of some Martu families to Perth.

In general, when this report speaks of Martu engagement with KJ, the focus is on those Martu who live in the geographic region primarily serviced by KJ: Newman and the remote Western Desert Martu communities.

4. KJ's organisational values

Reflecting on KJ's organisational values

At the commencement of this project, KJ had seven organisational values that were developed with Martu in 2008 soon after KJ was formed. A small group of Martu and staff discussed and agreed on a set of words that reflected what they believed was the right way for the organisation to work – they thus reflected the shared perspective, rather than flowing solely from Martu. This exercise was undertaken when KJ was small, had few Martu or non-Martu staff and only very small programs. That statement of values was aspirational, looking to a future that had not yet taken shape.

KJ's values and its embodiment of those values had not been formally reviewed since then. This evaluation was an opportunity for Martu to reflect on and articulate how they want organisations to work with them, including KJ. For KJ, it was a chance to review their values to ensure that they continue to align with how Martu want them to work.

At the beginning of the evaluation, two workshops were held with 18 members of the MLP. The MLP is made up of young Martu (aged between 18 to 35) who are building their capability to become leaders, especially at the interface between 'whitefella' and Martu worlds. During these workshops, MLP members were asked to reflect on and consider the ongoing relevance and appropriateness of KJ's existing seven organisational values. MLP members felt that overall, the seven values continued to reflect how Martu want KJ to work with them, with the exception of two changes:

- *Adding walyja [family] as an eighth value* – This value is about people working together and identifying with the work as one would with family.
- *Replacing the value of 'realism' with minyirrpa [being serious]* – 'Realism' was part of the initial set of values and was described as 'taking account of the real pressures and politics and realistic timeframes within which change can occur'. During design workshops, MLP members felt that this value did not resonate strongly with Martu and was unclear to many people in communities. MLP members changed this value to *minyirrpa* which means needing to take matters seriously and '*not playing games*' and '*being real*'.

The final list of eight organisational values was considered by other Martu in community consultation sessions held in Newman, Jigalong, Parnngurr, Punmu and Kunawarriti, and, in each case, validated.

KJ's eight organisational values as revised by Martu

Each of KJ's organisational values begin with a word in Martu language to embody the essence of the values as they relate to Martu. Each word used to describe the values were chosen by MLP members. The reader should be advised that while these words capture the concepts of each value, they are not direct translations of the English words that follow. Further explanations of the Martu words and concepts used to describe values is contained in Section six.

The final eight organisational values for KJ as revised by Martu are as follows:

1. **Walyja: Family** – People working together and identifying personally with this work as one would with family.
2. **Ngaparrji-Ngaparrji: Respect** – Martu and non-Martu can work strongly together if they respect each other and act with respect towards each other.
3. **Minyirrpa: Being serious** – Taking matters seriously, '*not playing games*' and being '*real about it*'.
4. **Yiltanyju: Honesty** – Talking to and dealing straight with each other, Government and others.

5. **Kujungka: Partnership** – Martu and non-Martu working together as equals, with complementary skills and knowledge.
6. **Warrkamu: Participation** – By building a culture of participation in Martu communities, individual Martu will be supported and strengthened.
7. **Yiwarra: Building** – Creating the future that Martu people want, that strengthens Martu society and engages confidently and effectively with mainstream society.
8. **Nyakuma nintirri: Reflection** – Combining action with reflection, to learn as we go.

5. Martu reflections on KJ’s embodiment of values

This chapter discusses Martu reflections on whether they believe KJ is living and demonstrating each of the eight values in the way that KJ works with and represents Martu communities.

1. *Walyja*: Family

Key evaluation finding: Martu feel KJ demonstrates a commitment to *walyja*. KJ works for the whole family – for old and young. Importantly, KJ also helps Martu connect to and care for country, which is an important part of looking after family.

Martu organisations should work with Martu as they would with family. People should also identify personally with this work as one would with family. It is also important to acknowledge that for Martu, *walyja* refers to old and young generations within a family group, but also to *ngurra* (country). For Martu, connecting to and looking after country is inextricably linked to family.

KJ creates work and activities for the whole family, old and young, and creates opportunities for Martu to connect to and care for country

When considering whether KJ demonstrates *walyja*, Martu referred to the fact that KJ works for the whole family and creates opportunities for both old and young generations.

“KJ work is for us. For our kids and old people. KJ work is the only work they have. It is everywhere...It is work for all the family – all old and young people” – Martu elder (2020)

For instance, KJ’s *Kalyuku Ninti* trips take old and young people back to remote traditional country, so that young people can learn from the elders about waterholes and traditional knowledge. KJ’s cultural programs also involve collecting and recording oral histories and family trees that stretch back several generations into *pujiman* (desert born) times.

Furthermore, and importantly for Martu, KJ is committed to and creates opportunities for Martu to reconnect with and care for country. KJ enables Martu to visit and look after waterholes that ancestors have left behind for future generations. As country is inextricably linked to family, by enabling connection to and caring for country, Martu feel that KJ is demonstrating a commitment to *walyja*.

“Ngurra and old people, looking after old people. Ancestors left country and waterholes behind for us. For future generations they need to keep looking after it well. That is what walyja is all about. Walyja is what KJ is. It is about looking after country and waterholes for generations.” – Martu elder (2020)

2. *Ngaparrji*-*Ngaparrji*: Respect

Key evaluation finding: Martu feel respected by KJ. KJ listen to and consult with old people who are the leaders in the community. They also follow Martu rules when carrying out their work.

Martu want to have a respectful relationship with the organisations that work with them. They want to feel respected by non-Martu and offer their respect in return. In particular, when Martu discuss this value, they often refer to the need for organisations to listen to and respect their old people. This aligns with Martu culture and values where elders are seen as the leaders and teachers in the community. Working respectfully with Martu means listening to and following the lead of old people.

KJ respect Martu

Martu strongly acknowledged that they feel respected by KJ. Martu feel that KJ listen to and consult with old people and put their old people first. Martu also observed that KJ respect and follow Martu rules when carrying out their work. Martu compared KJ with some mining companies who they feel do not work in a respectful way towards Martu, particularly in relation to visiting sacred grounds.

“KJ and Martu work well together and they respect Martu” – MLP member (2020)

“Working with old people in the front. KJ is just the driver but oldies are leading the way” – Martu elder (2020)

“Some other people doing wrong way. Going around and seeing wrong places. KJ works with old people in right way. KJ is working with old people and following Martu rules. Mining just go out to sacred ground but KJ follow elders in right way. Mining people going about it in wrong way and looking at country they are not meant to. KJ is working with old people and following Martu rules.” – Martu elder (2020)

*“KJ come back to us and ask if wrong or right then Martu says if Martu don’t like it then they listen.”
– Kunawarritji community member (2020)*

3. *Minyirrpa*: Being serious

Key evaluation finding: KJ is seen by Martu as serious about working with Martu to create a better future. Importantly, Martu feel that KJ do not “play games” and there is minimal political in-fighting. KJ has also worked seriously with Martu for over ten years.

Martu want organisations working with them to take matters seriously and to not “play games”. When discussing this value, Martu often referred to incidents of political in-fighting taking place within other Martu organisations at the detriment of communities. Martu want organisations working with them to “be serious” and “be real” about improving outcomes for communities.

KJ are not “playing games”; they are serious about working with Martu

In consultations, Martu consistently shared a sense of confidence in KJ’s seriousness and commitment to improving outcomes for Martu. In particular, people explained that KJ does not fight, are not angry, has minimal political in-fighting and does not “play games”. This is in contrast to politics between Martu and other organisations in more recent years. Martu feel KJ is real about their focus on working with Martu to create a better future.

“KJ are not angry. Not fighting. Truly and serious. They are not just playing around...” – Martu elder (2020)

*“They are not getting wild at each other and growling at each other but being kind to each other”
– Martu elder (2020)*

“KJ are working seriously” – Punmu community member (2020)

KJ has been working seriously with Martu for over ten years

KJ’s commitment to Martu begun 15 years ago in 2005 when it was created by Martu elder, Muuki Taylor, together with Sue Davenport and Peter Johnson. KJ was established to look after Martu culture and heritage and to ensure that the ongoing connection Martu have with country remained strong. Mr Taylor was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in 2020 together with Ms Davenport and Mr Johnson in recognition of their work and partnership through KJ.

KJ’s commitment has endured over the past fifteen years and has materialised through numerous programs for Martu including land programs such as on-country trips and ranger work, cultural programs such as the language program and recording family trees, and social programs such as the MLP. These programs have evolved and adapted over time to meet the changing needs of Martu. KJ’s long term and ongoing commitment to Martu is also testament to its seriousness and dedication to building a future that Martu want in modern Australia.

4. Yiltanyju: Honesty

Key evaluation finding: Martu feel that KJ is truthful and honest. KJ is also helping to make personal finances clearer for Martu.

Martu want organisations to be transparent and honest when working with Martu and with others.

Martu feel KJ is truthful and honest

Martu have acknowledged that KJ is honest when dealing with Martu and other stakeholders. In particular, Martu feel KJ are transparent about their dealings and are truthful.

“Yes they are honest. Money story. Making it visible and working truthfully. They are not dishonest but honest people.” – Martu elder (2020)

“It is not hidden. It is yilta [true]. It is visible.” – Martu elder (2020)

“KJ is telling me the truth. KJ is honest and true.” – Kunawarritji community member (2020)

KJ is helping to make personal finances clearer for Martu

In recent consultations, some Martu explained that at times they felt confused around how their wage payments and timesheets are processed. For example, one Martu man explained that he was often confused about why his bank balance was not the same as what he expected. Some Martu have asked for more clarity around how payments to Martu are processed and better financial literacy overall. For instance, one MLP member identified a need to learn how to save money.

“KJ need to help show us how to save...You can’t get a job because of cultural stuff and so we miss out and we only have enough for maybe one month. We don’t know how to save money...Martu never do tax return and we need KJ to do tax return and police clearance” – MLP member (2020)

KJ is currently developing a financial literacy program to address Martu money concerns. This program intends to help Martu understand basic financial concepts including taxation, superannuation, pay advances and savings. Furthermore, KJ is currently designing a payslip for Martu where key elements are depicted in graphical form to help Martu understand where their wages are going and why there may be less money in their bank account due to deductions for taxation, superannuation and debt repayments.

5. Kujungka: Partnership

Key evaluation finding: Martu feel strongly that KJ is working effectively in partnership with Martu. Many Martu feel both are ‘working together as one’. The ongoing situation with poor housing in communities, however, is impacting on the partnership.

Martu want to work alongside non-Martu organisations as equals. They want their skills and knowledge to complement one another and for both to continue learning together.

KJ is working in partnership with Martu

Martu strongly feel that KJ and Martu are “*working together as one*”. In consultations, Martu often spoke excitedly about the KJ and Martu working relationship, explaining that both come together, listen to each other and support one another. Martu feel KJ and Martu work effectively together in partnership.

This feeling was also shared by both young and old. The young spoke positively about their working relationship with KJ and elders expressed pride in the strength of the partnership today. They also shared a sense of confidence that the partnership will endure into the future.

“Martu and KJ working together as one.” – Martu elder (2020)

*“Martu and whitefella are working together as one – like tables and two chairs. Sitting together...Whitefella and Martu teaching each other. I teach [KJ ranger coordinator] and [KJ ranger coordinator] teaches me.”
– Kunawarritji community member (2020)*

“KJ are working well with Martu. Young and old are working together with KJ.” – Martu elder (2020)

“KJ is working better than they were before. More better when people are working together. More and more kujungka [partnership or togetherness] and becoming one.” – Punmu community member (2020)

The ongoing situation with housing is impacting the partnership

It is important to acknowledge that while Martu strongly reported feeling confident in their partnership with KJ, consultations also identified that the ongoing issue with poor housing in their communities is impacting KJ’s relationship with Martu.

Martu want to improve housing in communities and fairly or unfairly, look to KJ to resolve this issue. Unfortunately, as a non-government community organisation, KJ is not in a position to ultimately resolve the issue of poor housing stock within remote communities without further government investment. Despite these contextual factors, consultations indicated that Martu are attributing some degree of the lack of progress to KJ, which is impacting KJ’s relationship with Martu.

The housing issue is discussed at length in Section Six of the first report.

Some Martu have also cautioned against the impact of staff turnover on the partnership

Some KJ Martu board members also cautioned that KJ’s staff turnover may be dampening the partnership between KJ and Martu. Many Martu observed that KJ staff change frequently, and that community often do not know who they are. Martu also stressed a need to ensure that new staff learn about the Martu way when they start.

It is important to balance these concerns with the fact that staff attrition is a common issue in remote and regional areas and that many of KJ’s staff have in fact remained within the organisation for many years. Nevertheless, for small Martu communities, relationships are significant and the departure of staff that people have come to know and trust is often felt particularly strongly.

“We get new staff turnover a lot and I don’t even know the staff. I don’t know half the staff anyway...New staff have to learn about Martu way, cultural way when they start”. – Martu board member (2020)

6. Warrkamu: Participation

Key evaluation finding: KJ has built a culture of participation and most Martu feel KJ exists for all Martu across all communities.

Martu want organisations working with them to build a culture of participation where all Martu feel included and welcome in their activities and program.

KJ has built a culture of participation

Martu feel KJ fulfils this value. Many acknowledged that KJ’s activities do not discriminate based on age or location but are open to all Martu across the desert. Importantly Martu also reported feeling

confident that any Aboriginal person coming from outside Martu country can work with KJ, which strongly indicates a culture of participation and inclusiveness.

“It [KJ] works for us. For old people and young people and all the communities.” – Martu elder (2020)

“Lots of work for everybody – helicopter, waru [fire], ranger work, funerals for family. Always work for Martu.” – Martu elder (2020)

“KJ has been working with everybody.” – Parnngurr community member (2020)

“Not just us it’s long way east. Rangers and all the connections across the desert...It hasn’t just been Parnngurr people but all people. All communities and all country is involved. Together. We all participate. If people come from other country, then they can come and work with KJ...It is for families all over and all across the desert.” – Martu elder (2020)

Through consultations, however, some Martu reported wanting more engagement with KJ. In particular, two to three Martu living in Jigalong reported feeling that they interact with KJ on a minimal basis and sometimes do not feel sufficiently included. It is important to note that these sentiments may have been particularly pronounced in recent consultations as KJ’s ranger program in Jigalong has been operating at a reduced level since 2019 due to difficulties hiring an appropriate Jigalong-based ranger coordinator.

“We interact with KJ maybe once or twice...It is the same people and when it comes to meetings like this, we come say a few things but we don’t work with them [KJ] every day. We are casual workers, but we should all be working for KJ. Where is the work for us?...I feel a bit left out.” – Jigalong community member (2020)

One KJ Martu board member also identified that he would like to see more Newman families engaging with KJ to go on country trips.

“There are people missing out and not communicating with them. Families are missing out. Based in town and not in community and they are missing out and not going out on country trips.” – Martu board member (2020)

7. Yiwarra: Building

Key evaluation finding: Martu feel KJ is dedicated to working with them to build a better future that Martu want. However, the ongoing situation with housing is also having some negative impact on how effectively Martu feel KJ is building for the future.

Martu want organisations to work with them to create a future that Martu want – a future where Martu society is stronger and engages confidently with mainstream society.

KJ is working with Martu to build a better future

Martu feel that KJ are committed to a shared vision of a better future for Martu. KJ’s activities and efforts are strongly aligned with building towards this vision.

“One line. KJ working in one together. There is no other yiwarra [pathway or track]. Everyone on one goal.” – Kunawarrtji community member (2020)

Over the past ten years, KJ has worked with Martu towards a future where Martu society is stronger and engages confidently with mainstream society. In recent consultations, Martu frequently referred to

the following programs and initiatives as important examples of KJ's commitment to and effectiveness at helping Martu build that future:⁶

- **On-country programs** – These programs include *Kalyuku Ninti* (Return to Country) trips where family groups return to places of cultural or historical significance (which started in 2005) and the ranger program which provides employment and training for Martu as rangers, fulfilling standard ranger responsibilities to manage the environment (started in 2009). These programs have played a significant role in helping Martu strengthen their traditional Martu identity. For example, they have helped Martu look after and care for country, rekindle cultural learning between old and young, look after family, build confidence and a strong sense of purpose.

“Ranger program has been good. Taking family out so everyone can learn from old people.”
– MLP member (2020)

“We’re going all around with the next generations; we’re taking them so that they learn about our country and waterholes. We’re showing them and teaching them. After having been there they will keep checking on and looking after waterholes. When we have died, they will grow up alongside them.”
– Martu elder (2016)

- **Martu Leadership Program** – MLP began in 2014 and has built on the positive outcomes created by KJ's on-country programs. Martu participating in the program have strengthened relationships and the intergenerational roles of younger and older Martu. They have also become more confident in two-way learning (Martu way and 'whitefella' way) and their capacity to change current circumstances for their communities.

“We didn’t know about the law and governance, and companies, how they work. That’s why it’s making us more stronger, so we can have a voice for Martu, and for the elders. So, we can build our confidence, build our communities, build it for our kids. So, they can follow in our footsteps”
– MLP member (2016)

- **Wama Wangka program** – Wama Wangka began in 2019 and is a Martu response to alcohol and drug abuse, family violence, depression, suicide and a range of other destructive forces. The program has been designed and led by Martu with KJ's support. The program allows Martu to talk honestly about individual and social problems within a Martu cultural frame while being on country. Despite being a young program, many Martu reported very positively about the program and have expressed a strong desire for more and more Martu to participate.

“Too much wama [alcohol]. Get Wama Wangka is good. Get more Martu to go to the program. More Martu to join the Wama Wangka program. A lot of young people dying from drinking and won’t have time to see kids and great grand kids.” – Parnngurr community member (2020)

- **Building relationships with 'whitefellas'** – KJ has supported Martu to build relationships with local police, the Police Commissioner, local Magistrate and BHP. This work has been important to bridge an understanding between the mainstream world and Martu. It has also been vital to laying the foundations for a productive working relationship to co-design alternative solutions and opportunities that may be more appropriate and effective for Martu. In particular, KJ has facilitated and organised trips with 'whitefellas' out on country. Martu feel these trips have been one of the most effective ways to build better understanding, foster more respect and develop deeper relationships with 'whitefellas'.

“Taking whitefellas out on country has been one of the best things. Policemen, BHP, Magistrate. This has helped build a relationship with them.” – Newman community member (2020)

⁶ A detailed evaluation of how KJ's activities have contributed to outcomes that Martu want to see is contained in the first report titled *“Evaluation of KJ Against Martu Outcomes”*.

Housing is also impacting how effectively Martu feel KJ is building for the future

As discussed above, a chief concern for Martu is the poor state of housing in communities and Martu look to KJ to resolve this issue, however, it is not within KJ's remit or ability to ultimately resolve this concern without further government funding.

Recent consultations have identified that despite this, Martu are attributing some degree of the lack of progress to KJ, which is impacting on how effectively they feel KJ is building for the future.

The housing issue is discussed at length in Section Six of the first report.

8. Nyakuma nintirri: Reflection

Key evaluation finding: Martu feel KJ listens, learns from the past and fixes their mistakes.

Martu want organisations to be reflective, to listen to Martu and to learn from their mistakes so that they may continue working effectively with Martu.

KJ listen to Martu, reflect on the past, and fix their mistakes

Martu, particularly elders who have been part of KJ's journey over the past ten years, shared in recent consultations that they feel KJ listens to Martu, learns from the past and addresses any mistakes that they have made. Some elders explained that Martu will "kick out" any 'whitefellas' who do not work in the right way. KJ has been around for a long time as they listen to Martu and continue learning and improving how they work with Martu along the way.

"Looking back and learning and working straight and right way. They have to go straight. A straight line"
– Martu elder (2020)

"KJ are clever because they are listening to Martu...If KJ makes mistakes, they go back to fix it. Martu will kick KJ out if they do wrong thing. Martu will send whitefella away if they don't work properly but KJ has been here long time because they are working properly. KJ is working well and not repeating their mistakes."
– Martu elder (2020)

6. Explanation of Martu words used to describe values

Each of the eight organisational values begin with a word in Martu language chosen by members of the Martu Leadership Program (these are young Martu who are building their capability through the program to become leaders at the interface between ‘whitefella’ and Martu worlds).

Martu words were included to embody the essence of the values as they relate to Martu and to ground the values in Martu concepts. They are not, however, direct translations of the English words that follow. For example, *walyja* does not directly translate to ‘family’ in the Western sense of the word but carries a far more expansive meaning. In the Martu world, *walyja* includes concepts of country, language, clan, close and extended family.

To assist the reader in ‘thinking Martu’ and gaining an appreciation of the richness and depth of Martu concepts, this section provides explanations of the Martu words used to describe the eight values as they are understood in the Martu world.

1. ***Walyja* – used to describe the ‘family’ value**

The word and concept of *walyja* is a far richer concept than the Western idea of ‘family’. It encompasses ‘all to which I belong, all that which together gives me my identity’. It expresses the interconnectedness that is the bedrock of the Martu worldview and identity. It is profound. Within the Martu world, it includes country, language, clan, close and extended family. It locates identity within a social context. ‘Belonging’ is almost a better translation than simply ‘family’. As it is that profound, it implies deep commitment and loyalty.

2. ***Ngaparrji-Ngaparrji* – used to describe the ‘respect’ value**

Ngaparrji-Ngaparrji refers to reciprocity – the Martu social practice of reciprocal sharing. This is a fundamental connective practice in Martu society and lore. Respect is inherently two-way, though not identical. You have certain rights and obligations to someone else, and they have reciprocal (not identical) rights and obligations to you – It is far richer than ‘respect’ and locates the relationship and respective roles within the Martu kinship system. Reciprocity is more than simply a social practice, it reflects balance and mutuality, the inter-obligations that ground social cohesion and social regeneration. Martu would assert that this value comes from *jukurrpa*, from the Dreaming. It is thus more than simply a desirable human value.

3. ***Minyirrpa* – used to describe the ‘being serious’ value**

‘Serious’ is a direct and accurate translation of *minyirrpa*. This is a strongly expressed value among Martu in KJ. It carries the idea of purpose, of direction and heft, as well as connoting maturity and realism built on experience. As Martu have expressed it, there is a rejection of ‘playing around’. There is a clear sense that nothing strong can be built unless people are serious.

4. ***Yiltanyju* – used to describe the ‘honesty’ value**

Yilta means ‘truth’ – *yiltanyju* means ‘a person who speaks the truth’. It is personal, speaking to a person’s character: having authenticity and trustworthiness. Honesty is more than valued; it is expected, assumed. In an organisational context, it speaks strongly to this being embedded and ubiquitous as a matter of course and habit – being part of people’s character.

5. ***Kujungka* – used to describe the ‘partnership’ value**

Kuju means ‘one’ and *kujungka* means ‘as one’ or ‘together’. This is a strongly held value in Martu society, reflecting a high value on social harmony and communality. That reflects the inter-reliance that underpins Martu society, a recognition that people are together and need

each other, more than a mere desire for company. In an organisational context, it speaks both to unity among Martu but also to Martu and whitefellas coming together, a value increasingly commonly expressed in a cross-cultural context. However, it is a far deeper and richer idea than 'partnership', although that term reflects an aspiration for a respectful and equal cross-cultural relationship.

6. *Warrkamu* – used to describe the 'participation' value

Warrkamu is based on the English word 'work'. As a newly adapted concept, it therefore has no traditional equivalent. It has been appropriated and adapted in speech to mean 'work' in the broad sense of drive and participation. In 2008, the founders of KJ originally identified as an aspiration the idea of creating a 'culture of participation' – an environment in which people were active and purposeful in communal activities. 'Work' is therefore an inadequate and misleading translation of the intent of this value. It is more directed to participation in purposeful, meaningful activity rather than to mainstream conceptions of employment ('having a job'). At the same time, a strongly expressed sentiment among Martu is that, in KJ, they work for their money – no handouts.

7. *Yiwarra* – used to describe the 'building' value

'Building' is a Western concept that Martu have now appropriated, although on their own terms. While there was a strong emphasis on progress and social advancement at an individual level in *pujiman* society, the focus at a societal level was on continuity rather than social change or progress. This is a profound difference between Martu and Western societies. Yet Martu now use the word *yiwarra*, which traditionally meant 'track' or 'path', in a metaphorical sense to express aspiration for the future and plans and strategies to achieve that future. In the modern Martu sense, a better translation of *yiwarra* may be 'direction', but that word lacks the active nature of 'building'.

8. *Nyakuma Nintirri* – used to describe the 'reflection' value

These Martu words mean 'keep looking and learn!'. They speak strongly to the idea of deliberate, active learning through very aware observation. That is an appeal to Martu, a statement of how they can move forward, learning in both worlds. The English equivalent refers to the need for an orientation of action/reflection in a cross-cultural environment.

The explanations above have been provided by KJ staff who have been working intimately with Martu for 20 years. KJ also see these values as operating at three different levels; they are not solely directed at either Martu or 'whitefellas':

- *For Martu* – these values reflect Martu aspirations for how they want Martu working within KJ to behave and interact. They are Martu values.
- *For Martu and 'whitefellas' together* – Martu and 'whitefellas' want these values to characterise their partnership, their joint endeavour.
- *For individual 'whitefellas'* – 'whitefellas' in KJ need to understand, respect and adhere to these values personally. These reflect how they should behave and work in KJ.

7. Conclusions and observations

Eight organisational values – how Martu want to work with others

This project was an opportunity for Martu to consider whether KJ's organisational values were still relevant and appropriate, to make any changes that better reflected their perspective and preferences and a chance for Martu to articulate how they want organisations to work with them.

The eight organisational values articulated by Martu describe how Martu want to work in partnership with others that is grounded in honesty and mutual respect. Martu want to be inclusive and continue learning from the past to create a better future. Martu are serious about building a better future for their communities and expect organisations working with them to be dedicated to the same vision. Martu want organisations to work together with them as they would with family.

These values may be a useful tool for Martu to describe to new and existing organisations how they want to work together for a better future. The values describe a method of working with Martu that will enable better outcomes.

For new organisations, it may help frame a new meaningful partnership. For existing organisations, it may be a useful way to reflect on whether current partnerships are in line with how Martu want to work and whether those partnerships are hindering or enabling outcomes. The articulation of values emphasises the importance of working together with Martu in the right way as a precondition to achieving the right outcomes.

Furthermore, it is useful to observe that the eight values are not directed to external organisations and 'whitefellas' only but are also directed to Martu as well. In consultations, it was clear in the manner in which Martu explained and described values that they are concepts engrained within Martu society. As such, they hold themselves accountable to those behaviours as well as external stakeholders. For example, the value of respect involves Martu wanting to feel respected by non-Martu, but also to offer their respect in turn as an expression of reciprocity.

Martu reflections on whether KJ is working in the right way

Martu overwhelmingly reported that KJ has been living up to and demonstrating its eight organisational values over the past ten years.

First and foremost, Martu feel that KJ has demonstrated a commitment to the value of *walyja* (family). KJ works for the whole family, old and young, and helps Martu care for country, which is also an important part of looking after family. Martu feel KJ is respectful towards elders in their communities, ensuring that "*old people are in the front*". KJ works with Martu as they would with family.

Martu feel KJ is serious about building a better future that Martu want – a future where Martu society is stronger and engages confidently with mainstream society. This is a vision that KJ has been dedicated to since it began in 2005.

Martu also feel confident that KJ is honest and truthful. They feel that KJ is working alongside them in partnership as equals. KJ has also built a culture of participation such that Martu feel KJ is "*for families all over and all across the desert*".

Martu feel that KJ listen to them, learn from the past and fix their mistakes should they make any.

Shifting Martu perspectives

It is also important to observe that throughout this project, Martu demonstrated a shift in their perspectives and how they see Martu engaging with mainstream Australia.

As a key part of this project, Martu reflected on how they want organisations to work with them, adjusted the original values to better suit their preferences and assigned Martu words to those values. In doing so, Martu demonstrated ownership and a commitment to building working relationships with organisations that Martu want.

The significance of this should be emphasised. It is a marked difference from the 2008 articulation of values, which did not have Martu words and reflected a shared perspective of a small group of Martu and non-Martu KJ staff rather than flowing solely from Martu. The Martu articulation of values through this project highlights a shift in Martu engagement with mainstream Australia.

Furthermore, the assignment and choice of Martu words to describe values also indicated a shift in Martu perspectives. In particular, there are certain words Martu have chosen to use which adapt traditional meanings into more modern and Western based concepts. For example, Martu used the term *yiwarra*, which traditionally means 'track' or 'path' to describe the value of 'building'. 'Building' is a western concept that Martu have now appropriated, although on their own terms. Traditionally, the idea of progress and social advancement at a societal level was foreign to traditional Martu society. Martu adoption of the concept of 'building' indicates a shift in Martu perspectives.

Similarly, Martu also used the term '*warrkamu*' to describe the value of 'participation'. The term is based on the English word 'work' and is in fact a newly adapted concept that has no traditional equivalent. It has been appropriated and adapted in speech to mean 'work' in the broad sense of drive and participation.

Annexure 1: Reference list

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